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NEW BABYLONIAN MATERIAL CONCERNING CREATION AND PARADISE

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We are just beginning to appreciate what a fascination the problem of beginnings had for the ancient Babylonians. Recently discovered texts make it clear that a number of myths were cherished which professed to tell how man was formed and how the elements of civilization, as they were known in Babylonia, came into existence. Opinions still differ as to the exact interpretation of some of these, and claims made for some of the texts will, in the opinion of the writer, have to be abandoned, but the new material is nevertheless most interesting and instructive.

All readers of this *Journal* are familiar with the epic of creation, parts of which were discovered by George Smith more than forty years ago. It has been translated many times and is accessible in many publications.¹ It is, in the form known to us, a version current in the seventh century B.C., but was apparently expanded from an earlier version. This story formed the culmination of the development of the Babylonian myths of origins. It accounts for the creation, not only of man, animals, and civilization, but of the heavens and earth and the stars as well.

A second account of the creation has also been known for nearly thirty years. It was unearthed by Rassam at Abu Habba in 1882, published by Pinches in 1891.² It has also been made known to theologians through many translations.³ It assumed the existence of the earth, and proceeded from that starting-point to trace the creation of agriculture and of city life.

¹ For example, in L. W. King's *Seven Tablets of Creation*, R. W. Rogers' *Cuneiform Parallels to the Old Testament*, and G. A. Barton's *Archaeology and the Bible*.

² In the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society* (new series), Vol. XXIII.

³ See note 1.

Another very fragmentary account of the creation written in Assyria exists in the British Museum. It naturally makes the god Ashur the chief agent of creation. The tablet is too badly mutilated to afford much knowledge of the details of the Assyrian version of the myth.¹

To these fairly well-known versions several items have been added during the last four years. As the first interpretation of any unilingual Sumerian text must in the present state of knowledge be considered tentative, the new material that has been added has to be sifted by critical study. This process is still in progress. Before taking up the new material it will be well for us to recall two detached bits of information that bear upon the questions involved, both of which have been known for several years. One has to do with the creation of man; the other with Paradise.

In the fifth tablet of the Gilgamesh Epic there is a description of the creation of the hero Engidu, or Eabani, by the goddess Aruru, who was, apparently, Nintu under another name. The passage runs:

The goddess Aruru, when she heard this,
A man like Anu she formed in her heart.
Aruru washed her hands;
Clay she pinched off and spat upon it;
Engidu, a hero, she created,
An exalted offspring with the might of Ninib.

This passage has often reminded scholars of the account of the creation of man in the J document in the second chapter of Genesis. It does not appear that the epic poet intended the tale to be taken for an account of the first creation of man. According to the epic, men had existed before this act. The goddess at the time of this creative deed desired a special hero for a special occasion, so she resorted to this method to obtain him. It is clear that he who passed on to us this myth left ample room for other myths as to the ultimate origin of man.

The other subject to which reference has been made is the so-called "temptation" cylinder, which represents two figures, a male and female, seated on either side of a palm tree. The male

¹ See Rogers, *op. cit.*, pp. 53 ff.

bears on his head the horns indicative of deity, while behind the female stands a serpent. George Smith published this in his *Chaldean Genesis*, without question, as a representation of the story of temptation of which the third chapter of Genesis gives us a biblical version. Menant in his *Glyptique orientale*¹ vigorously dissented from this view. Menant's reasons for his skepticism were based on the fact that a cylinder in the museum at The Hague also depicts a palm tree, on either side of which a goddess is standing. Each goddess is plucking fruit, and one of them is handing some of it to a third female figure. Shrubs are also pictured in the scene, as well as two birds. Ward has discussed the two cylinders at considerable length in his *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*² and reaches the conclusion that both are representations of agricultural deities and have no necessary connection with the story of the temptation.

While the Hague cylinder is clearly no more than an agricultural scene, its existence has no necessary connection with the "temptation" cylinder, which certainly contains in picture the main elements of the story of Eden. Even if the contention that the seals are both to be regarded as agricultural or garden scenes, it does not follow that there is no reference to the temptation in the one which pictures the man and woman. The writer has long believed that the story of Eden was a survival of a recollection of conditions in an early oasis.³ Oases are garden spots. In them vegetation flourishes. In Arabian oases palm trees are abundant. The scenes on these seals may well be "agricultural." They represent in each case a garden, or "paradise." In Babylonian thought the "garden" or palm orchard took the place of the oasis. The recognition of this in no way diminishes the probability that the scene which depicts the man, woman, and serpent surrounding the palm gives evidence that the Babylonians knew a story of Paradise which contained the essential elements of the third chapter of Genesis. With these facts in mind we are ready to consider the texts that have recently come to light.

¹ Pp. 189-91.

² Pp. 138-39. The "temptation" cylinder is reproduced in Fig. 388 and the Hague cylinder in Fig. 389.

³ Cf. *A Sketch of Semitic Origins, Social and Religious* (New York, 1902), p. 96, n. 1.

In 1913 Langdon published in his *Babylonian Liturgies* a "Liturgy to Nintud, Goddess of Creation," the text of which is inscribed on a clay prism in the Ashmolean Museum at Oxford. The prism is not in a good state of preservation, and numerous gaps in the text resulted. One fragment of this text from a tablet found at Nippur had previously been published by Radau,¹ and three other fragments from the same Babylonian city have since come to light.² The most important of these is the one contained in the writer's *Miscellaneous Sumerian Texts*, since it supplies a complete new section of the composition. With reference to this so-called "liturgy" Langdon says: "Each section of this liturgy ends with the same refrain, which, according to my interpretation, refers to the creation of man and woman, the biblical Adam and Eve."³ A closer study of the text in the light of the new fragments seems to dispel completely the idea that it refers to the creation of man. Langdon himself believes that the occasion which gave rise to the composition was probably the coronation of a patesi of the city of Kesh.⁴ Whether this be true or not, it appears to the writer that the refrain refers to some queen or goddess and should be translated: "Its lady, like Nintud in form, gave the land abundance." If this is the correct understanding of the passage, it follows that the "liturgy" adds nothing to our knowledge of the Babylonian conceptions of the creation of man.

In 1914 Dr. Arno Poebel published a new account of the deluge⁵ which appears to have had at the beginning of the tablet an account of the creation. About half of the tablet is broken away. The

¹ In his "Miscellaneous Sumerian Texts" in the *Hilprecht Anniversary Volume* (Leipzig, 1909), No. 8.

² One found by Langdon at Constantinople was published by him in the *Babylonian Expedition of the University of Pennsylvania, Series A: Cuneiform Texts*, Vol. XXXI (1914), Pl. 22; another from the Philadelphia Museum Langdon published in his *Sumerian Liturgical Texts* (Philadelphia, 1917), Pl. 61; the most important fragment is also in the Philadelphia Museum and is to be published by Barton, *Miscellaneous Sumerian Texts* (Philadelphia, 1917), No. 11.

³ *Babylonian Liturgies*, p. 86.

⁴ *Ibid.*

⁵ The text was published in Vol. V of the Publications of the Babylonian Section of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania, entitled *Historical and Grammatical Texts*, Pl. 1, and translated in Vol. IV of the same series, entitled *Historical Texts*, pp. 9 ff.

lost portion includes the beginning of all the columns on the obverse of the tablet. The legible portion of the text begins in the midst of a speech of some deity. If the writer correctly understands the text, it reads as follows:

My human-kind from its destruction I will [raise up];
 With the aid of Nintu my creation. . . . I will raise up;
 The people in their settlements I will establish;
 The city, wherever man builds one (it is his protection),
 therein I will give him rest.
 Our house—its brick may he cast in a clean spot!
 Our places in a clean place may he establish!

Thus far we have the address of one deity to another. Then the text proceeds:

Its brilliant splendor, the temple platform, he made aright,
 The exalted regulations he completed for it;
 The land he divided; a favorable plan he established.
 After Anu, Enlil, Enki, and Ninkharsag
 The black-headed race had created,
 All that is from the earth, from the earth they caused to spring.
 Cattle and beasts of the field suitably they brought into being.

At this point the first column ends. That it is really part of an account of the creation is shown from the extant portion of Column II, which, though fragmentary, tells how certain guardian spirits or deities were assigned to different cities, Nudimmud or Enki to Eridu; Utu or Shamash to Sippar, etc. Further, the account of the deluge probably did not begin until Column III, for in the extant portions of that column the reader finds himself in the midst of an account of the deluge, where the mother-goddess Nintu is uttering a lament over her lost children similar to the lament of Ishtar in the account of the deluge from the library of Ashurbanipal.¹

Clearly, then, this text discovered by Dr. Poebel contains a brief account of creation, but whether it is the original creation or

¹ The new text reads:

“Nintu [cried out] like [a woman in travail],
 The brilliant Ininni [uttered] a groan on account of her people.”

The text from Ashurbanipal's library reads:

“Ishtar cried like a woman in travail,
 Wailed the queen of the gods with her beautiful voice:
 Those creatures are turned to clay,” etc.

a re-creation after a partial destruction antedating the deluge is not quite clear. There is considerable to be said for the last-mentioned view. The allusion to raising up humankind from destruction in the first extant line of the text implies that what follows is a re-creation rather than the initial creation of mankind. This interpretation finds some confirmation in the last of the texts to be discussed below.

Who the god was who was to raise up people by the aid of Nintu is not clear. When the text tells of the creation of the "black-headed" race—the Semites of Babylonia—it attributes their creation to four deities, Anu, Enlil, Enki, and Ninkharsag. Anu was god of Erech; Enlil, of Nippur; Enki, of Eridu; while Ninkharsag, or "lady of the mountain," was an epithet applied to a mother-goddess in different cities—in Adab, Kesh, and Nippur. At Nippur the epithet was applied to Ninlil, the spouse of Enlil. Nintu was also an epithet applied at times to the same goddesses. It is doubtful, however, whether the poet who composed this text thought of Nintu and Ninkharsag as the same. In antiquity a new name usually meant a new divinity. Probably, therefore, Nintu and Ninkharsag were to him two goddesses. Interesting as the text is, it affords no complete account of the creation.

Another new and important text was published by Dr. Langdon in 1915 under the title *Sumerian Epic of Paradise, the Flood, and the Fall of Man*¹—a title that in the judgment of others who have studied the text is based on a misunderstanding of its contents.² It should be said that at one critical point in the text some lines are broken at the beginning. At least one of these Dr. Langdon com-

¹ It forms Vol. X, No. 1, of the publications of the Babylonian Section of the University Museum of the University of Pennsylvania. Before the publication of his book Langdon had published two articles on it in *PSBA*, 1914, pp. 188-98, 253-63.

² The text has been treated in the following publications: A. H. Sayce, *Expository Times*, XXVII (November, 1915), 88-90; Langdon, *ibid.* (January, 1916), pp. 165-68; J. D. Prince, "The So-called Epic of Paradise," *JAOS*, XXXVI, 90-114; "Further Notes on the So-called Epic of Paradise," *ibid.*, pp. 269-73; M. Jastrow, "The Sumerian View of Beginnings," *ibid.*, pp. 122-35; G. A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible* (Philadelphia, 1916), pp. 283-89; Langdon, "Critical Notes on the Epic of Paradise," *JAOS*, XXXVI, 140-45; M. Jastrow, "Sumerian Myths of Beginnings," *AJSL*, XXXIII, 91-144; Langdon, "The Necessary Revision of the Sumerian Epic of Paradise," *ibid.*, pp. 245-49.

pleted with an emendation different from that which seems probable to other scholars. It will be made clear as we proceed what the grounds are for the formation of an opinion as to how the line should be completed. To present the facts clearly to the reader and not lose him in the mazes of controversy, a new translation of the text in the light of all the work done on it by others will be presented section by section. Each section will be accompanied by discussion of the points involved.

Holy is [the place] where you are;
 The mountain Dilmun (?) is holy.
 Holy is the place where you are;
 . . . the mountain Dilmun (?) is holy.
 The mountain Dilmun (?) is holy, the mountain Dilmun (?)
 is pure,
 The mountain Dilmun (?) is pure, the mountain Dilmun (?)
 is brilliant.
 Alone in Dilmun (?) they lay down;
 Where Enki and his consort lay,
 That place is pure; that place is brilliant.
 Alone in Dilmun (?) [they lay];
 Where Enki with Ninella lay,
 That place is pure; that place is brilliant.

(Col. I, 1-12)

The beginnings of the first lines are broken away. Langdon supplies the lacuna in line 1 from the following syllables, so as to read:

[e-ne-ba]-am e-ne-ba-am me-en-ši-en

Jastrow supplies the lacuna from line 4 so as to read:

[ki-azag-ga]-am e-ne-ba-am me-en-ši-en.

In either case the emendation is conjectural. Although I formerly accepted Langdon's guess, Jastrow's gives a sense that is so much superior that its correctness seems probable.

The name of the mountain is uncertain. As has often been said, the ideogram is not the ideogram for Dilmun. In some places in this text, however, as well as in that discovered by Poebel, the ideogram is followed by the phonetic complement *na*; the name probably, therefore, ended in *n*, hence it may provisionally be read Dilmun (?). Dilmun, as we know it from other texts, was, however, not a mountain, but an island. It seems possible, therefore,

that the Dilmun of this text may not have been the same as the Dilmun of other passages. Jastrow has conjectured¹ that, like Mount Nizir, the mountain on which the Babylonian ark rested after the flood, it may have been in the far north. The mention of Magan at the end of the tablet suggests that it may have been in Arabia. These are possibilities, but at present we must be content to confess our ignorance and to wait. Wherever the writer of the poem believed the mountain that we have tentatively called Dilmun (?) to be situated, his conception of its condition is clear. He regarded it as holy, pure, and brilliant. Enki and his consort dwelt there alone. Its sacred soil was defiled by no other beings. In the light of this statement the lines that follow must be interpreted:

In Dilmun the raven (?) its cry uttered not,
 The *dar*-bird its *dar*-cry uttered not,
 The deadly lion destroyed not,
 The wolf a lamb seized not,
 The dog the kid tore not,²
 The *dun*³-animal the food-grain destroyed not,
 She planned not for the young offspring . . .⁴
 The birds of heaven their offspring hatched not,
 Doves eggs (?) lay not,
 To eye-disease "Thou art eye-disease" one said not,
 To headache "Thou art headache" one said not,
 To a mother "Thou art mother" one said not,
 To a father "Thou art father" one said not,

¹ *AJSL*, XXXIII, 105 ff. Langdon's effort to find a location for Dilmun on the eastern shore of the Persian Gulf (*Sumerian Epic of Paradise, the Flood and the Fall of Man*, pp. 9 ff.) does not commend itself. There is no real evidence for it.

² Langdon's reading *zu* at the end of the line is most improbable. As at the ends of the two following lines, *ba* should be read. His latest rendering, "The dog knew not the kid in repose," (*AJSL*, XXXIII, 245), is as unsuited to dog nature as the reading *zu* is to the context. His earlier suggestion to take *zu* in an obscene sense (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 140) has been sufficiently disposed of by Jastrow (*AJSL*, XXXIII, 106, n. 3).

³ The sign for the *dun*-animal appears to have been the picture of a pig (see the writer's *Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing*, No. 427). The animal in question would accordingly seem to have been a female swine.

⁴ The line is broken and the rendering uncertain. I take it to continue the preceding line. The two state that the sow neither uprooted grain nor cared for her young.

In a holy place no libation was poured out, in a city
 one drank not,
 The river-man "Cross it?" said not,
 The overseer filled no right hand,¹
 The musician "Sing!" said not,
 The prince of the city [Col. 1:13-30] commanded not.

Langdon takes this section to be a description of Paradise. Certain lines of the passage afford some resemblance, especially in Langdon's translation, to the description of the messianic kingdom in Isa. 11:1-9. A close examination convinces one, however, that if this is intended as a description of Paradise it is a most peculiar paradise. In hot oriental countries the first requisite of a paradise or "garden" or "park" is plenty of cool running water. Out of the biblical Eden there went a river that was divided and became four heads (Gen. 2:10). The apocalyptic vision of the heavenly Paradise included "a river of water of life bright as crystal" (Rev. 22:1). Mohammed described the paradise to which his followers were to go as "gardens twain . . . with dark green foliage . . . in each two gushing springs" (Koran 65:60 ff.). It is the abundant waters supplied to Damascus by its rivers that have led Arabian poets to sing of that city as a paradise. The mountain described in our text had, as yet, no water. That fact the sequel makes clear. We can, accordingly, scarcely call it a paradise.

It has already been noted that the opening lines of the poem declare that Enki and his consort lay down there alone. It was indeed, then, believed to be a divine dwelling-place, but not a place where gods and men dwelt together. As Jastrow and the writer have elsewhere pointed out, "the lion destroyed not," because there were no lions there.² Other animals and birds are declared not to have acted out their nature, because they too were absent. Eye disease and headaches were absent, because there were in this mountain no human eyes or heads to suffer. No one said, "Thou

¹ "Filling the hand" was an ancient expression for employing a person or consecrating him to an office; see Judg. 17:5, 12. Later it came among the Hebrews to be equivalent to "appoint to the office of priest," or "consecrate," as in Exod. 28:41, and often in the Priestly document. I take the text here to mean that the "overseer employed no one."

² See Jastrow, *JAOS*, XXXVI, 124; and *AJSL*, XXXIII, 106-8; also Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, p. 284.

art my father" or "Thou art my mother," for the place did not contain fathers, mothers, or children. Similarly there were there no overseers, ferrymen, musicians, or princes. The whole passage is simply a poetical way of saying that the gods were there alone. It describes no paradise in the ordinary acceptation of that term.

The third section of the poem represents the goddess Ninella, "the bright lady," who appears to have been both the wife and daughter of Enki (unless, as in Semitic, "father" is employed here as a designation of husband), as appealing to Enki to supply water for a city he had constructed. It runs:

Ninella to her father Enki said:
 A city thou hast founded, a city thou hast founded,
 its destiny thou hast fixed;
 In Dilmun (?) thou hast founded a city
 thou hast founded a city;
 a canal there is not;
 thou hast founded a city.

(Col. I, 31-36.)

[About nine lines are here broken away.]

That from the bright covering of thy great heavens may waters flow,
 May thy city be refreshed with water, may it drink,
 May Dilmun (?) be refreshed with water, may it drink,
 May the deep of bitter water flow as a deep of sweet water,
 May thy city be a house for the multitudes of the land,
 May Dilmun (?) be a house for the multitudes of the land!
 To shine, O sun-god, come forth!
 O sun-god, stand in heaven!
 Bring open water from the womb of this land,¹
 (And) fish, O moon-god, from the water!
 (In) the water-course on the face of the land, O earth's sweet water,
 come!

(Col. II, 1-11.)

These lines call for little comment. They emphasize the waterlessness of the city in the holy mountain of which the opening

¹ The line is difficult, and every scholar translates it differently. No translation is more than a guess. The rendering here given takes *a* = "water," *tug* = *pitu* = "open," and *šar* (or *ezen*) = *kirimmu*, "womb"; see *Origin and Development of Babylonian Writing*, No. 170³³.

lines speak. They also make clear the fact that no one except the god and goddess dwell there. It is the desire of Ninella that, with the gift of water, the city may become the house of the multitudes of the land.

The lines that follow contain Enki's reply to this appeal:

That from the bright covering of the great heavens waters may flow,
Its city be refreshed, may drink,
Dilmun (?) be refreshed, may drink,
The deep of bitter water flow as a deep of sweet water,
The fields, the meadows
The city be a house for the multitudes of the land,
Dilmun (?) be a house for the multitudes of the land,
To shine may the sun-god come forth—let it be so.

(Col. II, 12-19.)

After making this reply Enki proceeded to take the necessary steps to bring about the accomplishment of the request that he had granted.

In accordance with a widespread belief of early peoples, creative acts were believed to follow marital unions of a god and goddess. This was the view of this poem, as the following lines make clear:

He who alone is wise,¹
To Nintu, mother of the land,
Enki, who is wise,
To Nintu, mother of the land,
His member he fully exposed,
His member, inserting, he caused to sink into her womb;
His member large verily he did not draw aside.
She said, "To me no man has ever come."
Enki cried,
By the spirit of heaven he swore,
"Lie with me, lie with me," he said.
Enki, the father of Damganunna, spoke his word,
By Ninkharsag the fields were flooded.

(Col. II, 20-30.)

The idea set forth here is corroborated in another text which is translated below. It is the conception that creative acts are acts

¹ I.e., Enki.

of marital union on the part of a god and goddess. Jastrow has cited examples of this from many parts of the world in his elucidation of this text. In addition to the examples cited by him attention may be called to the Japanese conception that the other gods, the islands of Japan, and the imperial line were all begotten by Izanagi, the primal male deity, and Izanami, the primal female deity, through natural generation.¹ The physical union of Enki and Ninella (also called Ninkharsag) brought forth the waters necessary for the irrigation of the hitherto waterless holy mountain where the god and goddess dwelt. The next lines describe in a somewhat enigmatical passage how these waters came.

The fields received the waters of Enki.
 It was the first day whose month is first;
 It was the second day whose month is second;
 It was the third day whose month is third;
 It was the fourth day whose month is fourth;
 It was the fifth day whose month is fifth;
 It was the sixth day whose month is sixth;
 It was the seventh day whose month is seventh;
 It was the eighth day [whose month is eighth];
 It was the ninth day whose month is ninth—the month of out-
 pouring of water²
 Like fat, like fat, like abundant sweet cream,
 [Nintu], the mother of the land,
 . . . Had brought them forth.

(Col. II, 33-45.)

In the enumeration of the months these lines present an iteration such as appears to have been very attractive to early men. The period covered is nine months. What is the significance of this? It is possible to trace here two ideas. Possibly the two were combined. The Tigris begins to rise in March, which, according to the later Babylonian calendar, was the first month. The overflow of the Euphrates does not fully subside until the sixth month, and

¹ See G. W. Knox, *The Development of Religion in Japan* (New York, 1907), pp. 21 f.

² In *nam-sal-a-ka* (translated differently by different scholars) the important element is *sal*. It is the sign for "womb," "woman," and designates also various derived meanings, among which is *šipku*, "pouring out." As pointed out in the text, this meaning seems on the whole to fit best.

the winter rains are at their height in the ninth month. Possibly these facts influenced the poem, but they could not have been the determining facts, since the rains do not cease in nine months. It seems altogether probable, as Jastrow has suggested,¹ that the determining fact in the mind of the writer was that the period of gestation before a human birth is nine months. After nine months Nintu brought forth waters that produced fertility as abundant as fat and cream. This fits in with the whole idea that the fertilizing waters were born from the goddess. This idea being kept in mind, the period involved in the actual irrigation of Babylonia by the overflow of the rivers and the rain might easily seem to be nine months also.

At the conclusion of line 45 our present text of Column II ends with a fracture in the tablet. Evidently, however, the account of how the waters were generated and began to flow upon the earth was concluded with Column II. Column III is occupied with an account of how the water was received by two earth-goddesses, Ninshar, goddess of gardens or of cultivated land, and Ninkurra, goddess of the mountains. Of course logically there could be no gardens until there was water, but in the naïve thought of early men the goddess of garden lands was thought to have existed before that. The fondness of early men for repetition—a fondness akin to that of children—is manifested in the poem by putting practically the same words into the mouth of the two goddesses, one after the other. They are as follows:

Ninshar on the bank of the river cried (?):
 "O Enki, for me they are filled!"
 His messenger, Usmu, he called:
 "Man, their favorite son, has not been purified,
 Ninshar the favorite has not purified."
 His messenger, Usmu, answered:
 "Man, their favorite son, has not been purified,
 Ninshar the favorite has not purified."
 My king, the storm-bringer, the storm-bringer,²

¹ *AJSL*, XXXIII, 114.

² Jastrow, *AJSL*, XXXIII, 126.

His way at once to the boat went,
 Two streams (?)¹ like Shamash² he carried.³
 He closed the hatch,⁴ with fire he purified;
 Enki flooded the fields;
 The fields received the waters of Enki.
 It was the first day whose month is first;
 It was the second day whose month is second;
 It was the ninth day whose month is ninth, the month
 of the outpouring of water.
 Like fat, like fat, like abundant sweet cream,
 Ninshar like fat
 Had brought them forth.

(Col. III, 1-20.)

In these lines several strands of thought are mingled in that sort of confusion that sometimes occurs in folklore when two or three stories, originally different, are blended into one. At the beginning Ninshar appears to be rejoicing that the canals are filled for her. Then Enki and his messenger, Usmu, speak of the non-purification of man. The creation of man is here taken for granted. Possibly it is assumed that the creation as described in the tablet, discussed

¹ This line has puzzled all interpreters. My rendering of it is wholly tentative: *gu-ba* may possibly be an ideogram, or *gu* may be an ideogram and *ba* = "his." If my interpretation of the line is correct, it states that Enki carried two *gu-ba*, like Shamash. From Col. IV, 22, it appears that the *gu-ba* could hold water. On the seal cylinders Shamash is frequently pictured carrying a vase from which two streams issue; see Ward, *Seal Cylinders of Western Asia*, Nos. 284, 285, 286, 287, 288, 292. Sometimes, when so represented, Shamash is represented as sailing in a boat as Enki does here (Ward, *ibid.*, No. 292). It seems probable, therefore, that as Enki sailed away to irrigate he may have been thought to have carried streams.

² Jastrow (*op. cit.*, p. 126) claims that the next sign is the sign for 2/3. In this he is, however, mistaken. I have examined the tablet, and it is clearly the sign for 1/3, *šuššana*. But how is it to be interpreted? The ordinary numerical sign for "20" also had the meaning *šuššana*, because in the sexagesimal system 20 is 1/3 of 60 (see *OBW*, 431¹⁷). Now "20" is the numerical writing of the name of Utu (Akkadian, Shamash), the sun-god; see *CT*, XXV, 50, 10). I take it that here *šuššana* is employed as a numerical writing of Shamash, and that the text states that, as Enki sailed away in the storm cloud, he sailed as Utu does on his daily course through the heavens. A Sumerian hymn represents the moon as thus sailing in a bark across the heavens; see *CT*, XV, 17, 11 f.

³ I divide the syllables of the line differently from Jastrow, taking the verb to be *ba-nam-mi-in-rà*. *rà* or *tum* (the sign may have either phonetic value, *OBW*, 207³) may be given a causative signification.

⁴ *gab* = *pitû*, "open," "opening"; *OBW*, 180³⁶; so Jastrow.

below, is known to the reader. At all events, man is not purified. Enki, the god of the storm cloud, accordingly embarks on his boat and launches into the deep, but instead of purifying man he brings rain on the earth and fills the canals. Then when this is done, a kind of refrain repeats the closing lines of Column II, substituting Ninshar for Nintu, thus attributing the begetting of rain to Ninshar. The first two lines appear to continue the previous narrative. Lines 3-8, which refer to the purification of man, have no connection with the context, unless it was necessary that he should be purified before the benefits of irrigation could be enjoyed by the earth. If this is the point of view, it is not made clear. One is tempted to think that the lines are an extraneous element that was imperfectly fused with the story. Lines 9-14 embody a myth whereby Ea brought irrigation by rain. This may have been a part of the original story, however, simply supplying the detail of how the water was distributed after Nintu had brought it forth. It seems probable that it was a separate myth that was woven into the epic. Lines 15-20 probably embody still another myth that made Ninshar the mother of the rain. If one says that Ninshar is but Nintu under another name, it does not alter the fact of the separate myth. In antiquity difference of name implies difference of personality, and the blending of deities is a later syncretistic movement.

Ninkurra [on the bank of the river] cried (?):
 "O Enki, for me they are filled, they are filled!"
 His messenger Usmu he called:
 "Man, their favorite son, has not been purified.
 Ninkurra the favorite has not purified."
 His messenger Usmu answered:
 "Man, their favorite son, has not been purified,
 Ninkurra the favorite has not purified."
 My king the storm-bringer, the storm-bringer,
 His way at once to the boat went,
 Two streams (?) like Shamash¹ he carried.

¹ The reading here is *bar-dim* instead of *šuššana-dim*, as in line 11. If there were one more perpendicular stroke, *bar* would become *šuššana*. Probably the omission is a scribal error. *bar* = *uēbubu*, *uēlulu*, and *namaru*, all of which mean bright (*OBW*, 77³⁴, ³⁵, 116), is, however, a good descriptive epithet of the sun-god.

He closed the hatch, with fire he purified;
 Enki flooded the fields;
 The fields received the waters of Enki.
 It was the first day whose month is first;
 It was the ninth day whose month is ninth, the month
 of the outpouring of water.
 Like fat, like fat, like abundant sweet cream,
 Ninkurra like fat had brought them forth.

(Col. III, 21-38.)

As already remarked, Ninkurra is goddess of the mountain land. The word *kur* also stands for "country," i.e., lands both cultivated and uncultivated. Ninkurra was accordingly the goddess of land in general in contrast to the garden lands. This section tells how the irrigating waters reached these lands, but its material presents the same sort of mixture and motifs as the preceding section concerning gardens.

The next episode, III, 39—IV, 48, introduces a new and much disputed character, the god Takku (whom Langdon calls Tagtug).¹ So many lines of Column IV are lost that the significance of the episode is obscure, though it is clear that it, like the others, deals with the giving of fertility. It will be best first to present the translation. I shall call the name of the god Takku instead of Tagtug.

The god Takku to receive his outpouring²
 Nintu to Takku [concerning the outpouring] spoke:
 "I will irrigate³ thee with my irrigation
 With favorable words will I speak
 The one alone that will restrain it

¹ How the name should be vocalized is as yet not clear. Langdon reads it Tagtug (which is phonetically possible), and endeavors to show that Noah is a translation of it (which is most improbable). It is far better to follow the general rule that when two signs stand side by side, the first of which possesses a syllabic value ending in a consonant with which one of the phonetic values of the other begins, they are to be so vocalized as to express this vocalic harmony. This gives the reading *Takku*.

² The phrase is *sal-ni dim*; *sal*, as we have seen, can mean "outpouring"; *dim*=*liqû*, "take" (*OBW*, 603). I take *sal-ni*, as in II, 42; III, 17 and 36, to refer to the coming of the waters. As will appear below, Takku, as a god of cultivated land, was particularly interested in this.

³ *ri*=*rahaşu*, "inundate," "wash." On account of the context it seems better to interpret it as referring to the inundation than to render it "purify," as Jastrow does.

Enki for me shall. . . .

[IV, 1 ff., twelve lines are wholly lost.]

To Takku to receive the outpouring. . . .

[Four lines are broken away.]

The tree (?)¹ let him plant,

The tree (?) let him plant,

At the tree for explanation of the great outpouring² let my
begotten stand (?),

Let the two *gu-ba*³ be filled with water,

Abundant water let him pour out,

Reservoir water let him pour out,

The barren land let him irrigate,

As gardener let him go forth (?),

On the bank, along the bank let. . . .

Who art thou? The garden

For Enki, the gardener. . . .

[Five lines are broken away.]

The tree (?) he planted,

The tree (?) he planted; at its base he rested.

Enki turned his eyes to him; his sceptre he lifted up;

Enki to Takku took his way.

At the tree (?) he said: "A holy revelation," "a holy revelation!"⁴

"Who is it that thou art?"

"I am a gardener; joyful

For a price I will give thee."

Takku with joyful heart at the tree (?) the revelation beheld,⁵

Enki to Takku explained his outpouring.

The promised fruit was given to him,

At the tree (?) it was given to him,

At the tree (?) it was given to him.

Takku received the outpouring; with the left hand he grasped it;
with the right he seized it.

(Col. III, 39—Col. IV, 48.)

The translation of this broken and difficult section is tentative only. If this rendering at all represents the meaning of the original,

¹ Jastrow's reading of the text is here tentatively followed.

² I read *dim-sal-nun*, taking *dim*=*liqû*, "to receive," or "how to receive." It might be explained as equal to *kababu*, "bend," "subdue," and be held to refer to the knowledge of how to subdue the overflow to the uses of agriculture.

³ Whatever this object was, it appears to have been something that could hold water.

⁴ The signs are *gál-el gál-el*; *gál*=*pitû*, "open," and *el*= "bright," "holy."

⁵ *šub*=*palûsu*, "see" (?); *OBW*, 69²⁰.

Nintu first promises to her offspring Takku, a god of agriculture, to gain for him from Ea directions how to take advantage of the irrigating waters that had been begotten. After the first break in Column IV Nintu appears to be giving to Takku directions as to what he shall do in order to induce Enki to come and impart to him the necessary directions for the use of the waters in irrigation. The last section of Column IV apparently relates how Takku did this, how Enki came and imparted to him the secret, and how as a result he received fruit. Enki would seem to have imparted the information in a dream while Takku was resting at the foot of a sacred tree. In other words, like the myth of Oannes in Berossos, we are here told how Enki, the original of Oannes, taught agriculture. Thus understood, this episode follows naturally upon the preceding ones.

The fifth column contains (lines 1-36) a description of the growth of certain plants and an explanation of their use. Seven lines are broken away at the beginning, so that we do not know how the episode began, though, as Jastrow has pointed out,¹ line 7 can be restored in part from line 22. Without troubling the reader with the intricacies of restoration, the translation of this episode is as follows:

[The wood-plant grew,]
 [The salt-plant] grew,
 [The . . . plant] grew,
 [The *a-pa-sar*-plant] grew,
 [The *tu-tu*-plant] grew,
 [The . . . plant] grew,
 [The . . . plant] grew,
 [The cassia] plant grew.
 "O Enki, for me they are brought forth;
 they are brought forth."²
 To his messenger Usmu he spoke, he said:
 "The plants, their fate forever [I have determined].
 "What is this? What is this?"³
 His messenger Usmu returned:
 [.]

¹ *Op. cit.*, p. 133.

² Perhaps it is Takku speaking.

³ The question is apparently asked by Usmu. The reply is omitted, but is really given in the words of Usmu to Takku.

"My king has commanded the wood-plant,
 That it may be cut off and eaten.
 My king has commanded the salt-plant,
 That it may be cut off¹ and eaten.
 My king has commanded the . . . plant,
 That it may be cut off [and eaten].
 My king has commanded the *a-pa-sar*-plant,
 That it may be cut off and eaten.
 [My king] has commanded the *tu-tu*-plant,
 [That it may be cut off] and eaten.
 [My king has commanded the . . . plant],
 [That it may be cut off and eaten].
 [My king has commanded the . . . plant],
 That it may be cut off and eaten.
 [My king] has commanded the cassia plant,
 That it may be cut off and eaten."

(Col. V, 7-36.)

For the plants whose fate he had fixed he pronounced the edict. In the lines just translated the words "my king" refer, of course, to Enki. Usmu, in reporting the words of his master, thus designates him. Usmu accordingly reports that eight plants may be eaten. Through a misunderstanding of the passage, entirely natural in studying a fragmentary text the first time, Langdon in his earliest articles on the tablet inferred that the plant which he now rightly translates cassia was the forbidden fruit. Having taken Tagtug (Takku) for Noah, he reached the conclusion that according to this text Noah ate the forbidden fruit which was the cause of the fall of man. Later study of the passage has, however, shown that Enki gives permission to eat the cassia as well as the other plants, so that there can be no question of forbidden fruit at all.

In the preceding section Enki had taught how to make use of irrigating waters in agriculture, so as to obtain fruit; in this section he explains what fruits may be eaten. The episode therefore follows naturally upon those that precede, and relates another step in the unfolding of the knowledge which made civilization possible.

The next section relates how the goddess Ninkharsag, another of the mother-goddesses, who was in reality identical with Nintu,

¹ In the Sumerian two different words are employed with regular alternation for "cut off." One of them might be rendered "plucked," as Langdon and Jastrow have done.

Ninshar, and Ninkurra, though perhaps not recognized as such by the makers of this poem, became angry for some reason and uttered a curse upon man, whereupon Enlil placated her. The passage runs:

By Ninkharsag in the name of Enki a curse was uttered:
 "The face of life when he dies he shall never see [again.]"
 The great gods' in the dust sat down.
 The rebellious one to Enlil said:
 "I, Ninkharsag, brought forth for thee people; what is my reward?"
 Enlil, the begetter, answered the rebellious one:
 "Thou, Ninkharsag, hast brought forth people;
 In my city I will make two thrones (?) and thy name shall be called
 on there.
 As a dignitary his head alone is exalted;
 His heart (?) alone is changed;
 His eye alone is endowed with light."

(Col. V, 37-47.)

The last three lines here refer apparently to Takku, who would seem to be in some way the representative of humanity. Because of the favor that Enki had bestowed upon him, Ninkharsag, the spouse of Enlil of Nippur, became jealous of him and uttered a curse denying immortality to man. In order to placate her, Enlil promised that her throne should stand with his in Nippur, and that her name should be called upon there too. In conclusion he explains to her that she need not be jealous of her offspring as a whole, that only Takku has been accorded this extraordinary honor.²

This passage reflects the Sumerian-Semitic view that the gods were jealous of man, lest he attain immortality. The best-known expression of this view is in Gen. 3:22, but it also finds expression in the Babylonian Adapa legend.³ In that legend it is Enki (Ea) who manifests the jealousy; here it is Ninkharsag. The basic explanation of human mortality is the same in all these narratives, though, owing to the various forms assumed by myths in early folklore, the details of the explanation differ. The passage here translated affords a hitherto unknown explanation.

¹ The text has *dingir (an) a-nun-na-ge*, not *an-nun-na-ki*.

² This view is based on the interpretation suggested by Professor Prince (*JAOS*, XXXVI, 106), that lines 45-47 refer to Takku.

³ For the legend cf. G. A. Barton, *Archaeology and the Bible*, pp. 260 f.

The first twenty-three lines of Column VI are too broken for connected translation. It appears from the few words which can be made out that some appeal was made to Enlil and that some kind of a colloquy occurred between him and Ninkharsag. From the last part of the column it appears that, in view of man's mortality and the illnesses which resulted in death, the deities determined to impart to him a knowledge of the medicinal or curative powers. This inference is based on the following passage:

"My brother, what of thee is ill?"
 "My stable-cow is ill."
 "The god Absham have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, what of thee is ill?"
 "My flock is ill."
 "The goddess Nintulla have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, what of thee is ill?" "My mouth is ill."
 "The goddess Ninkautu I have brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, what of thee is ill?" "My mouth is ill."
 "The goddess Ninkasi have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, What of thee is ill?" "My genitals are ill."
 "The god Nazi have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother what of thee is ill?" "My right hand is ill."
 "The god Dazid have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, what of thee is ill?" "My rib is ill."
 "The goddess Ninti have I brought forth for thee."
 "My brother, what of thee is ill?" "My brain is ill."
 "The god Enshagmê have I created for thee."¹
 "Gloriously are they brought forth; they are created."
 (Col. VI, 24-42.)

These lines indicate that the cure of certain diseases of man and beast were assigned to different spirits. It seems probable, therefore, that an agreement that this should be done was reached by Enlil and Ninkharsag in the broken lines which precede.

¹ The names of these deities form a series of puns on the names of the things that are ill. Thus to cure *ab*, "the cow," there is the god *ab-sham*, "Father of the plant"; for *tul*, "the flock," Nintulla, "Lady of the flock"; for the first *ka*, "mouth," there is Ninkautu, "Lady who makes the weak mouth to speak"; for the second *ka* there is Ninkasi, "Lady who fills the mouth"; for *na-zi*, "genitals," the god Nazi; for *da-zid*, "right hand," the god Dazid; for *ti*, "rib" or "life," Ninti, "Lady of the rib" or "life"; for *me*, "intelligence" or "brain," Enshagmê, "Lord of the favorable intelligence."

The tablet concludes with the following invocation:

May Absham be king of vegetation!
 May Nintul be lord of Magan!
 May Ninkautu choose Ninazu as a spouse!
 May Ninkasi be the full heart's possession!
 May Nazi be lord of strength!
 May Dazid grasp the outreaching right hand!
 May Ninti be mistress of the month!
 May Enshagmê be lord of Dilmun (?)!
 Glory!

(Col. VI, 43-51.)

The appropriateness of a number of these petitions is still obscure to me.

Such is this so-called "epic" as it appears to the writer in the light of all that has been written upon it. As here interpreted, each part leads to the next subsequent part in an order that is, for a poem made from collected folk-tales, wonderfully logical. The whole has to do with the beginnings of irrigation and agriculture and with the civilization that grew out of them. The "Flood," as ordinarily understood, does not appear in the narrative. There is no ark, no Noah. Equally clear is it that there is in the narrative no fall of man. But what of the being Takku? What is to be made of him? It seems clear from the narrative that he is a god, but it is also clear that he seems in some way to be a representative of humanity. May he not be a kind of deified man—an Adam? Before answering these questions it will be well to present another document, discovered in the University Museum in Philadelphia by the writer, in which Takku is mentioned three times.¹ It runs as follows:

The mountain of heaven and earth

The assembly of the great gods entered as many as there were.

¹ Translations of this tablet have been published by the writer in *JAOS*, XXXVII, 36 ff.; *Proceedings of the American Philosophical Society*, LVI, 275 f.; and in the second edition of *Archaeology and the Bible*, May, 1916. The tablet is badly and carelessly written, and in studying the text finally, before sending the cuneiform copy to press, it has been possible to improve the readings in a few points. The reading "Takku" instead of "Tikku" is one of these. The rendering here given is based upon these improved readings and such maturing of judgment as, by further pondering on the possibilities and probabilities of Sumerian constructions, the writer has been able to reach. The character of the document, as at first perceived, is thus made to stand out more clearly. No one who knows the difficulties of a Sumerian text and the varieties of meanings that are possible to Sumerian words will need to be warned that the writer does not regard this rendering as final. He feels confident, however, that it represents the general meaning of the text.

A tree of Ashnan¹ had not been born, had not become green;
 Land and water² Takku had not created;
 For Takku a temple-terrace had not been filled in;
 A ewe (?) had not bleated (?), a lamb had not been dropped;
 An ass (?) there was not to irrigate the seed;
 A well and a canal (?) had not been dug;
 Horses (?) and cattle had not been created;
 The name of Anshan, spirit of sprout and herd,
 The Anunna, the great gods, had not known;
 There was no *šes*-grain of thirty fold,
 There was no *šes*-grain of fifty fold,
 Small grain, mountain grain, "hand-of-the-brilliant-lady"-grain
 there were not;
 Takku had not been brought forth, a shrine not lifted up;
 Together with Nintu the lord had not brought forth men.
 Shamash as leader came, to her *lalû*³ came forth,
 Mankind he begat;⁴ many men were brought forth;
 Food and sleep he did not plan for them;
 Clothing and dwellings he did not plan for them;
 The people with rushes and rope came,
 By making a dwelling a kindred was formed.
 To the gardens they gave drink;
 On that day they were green;
 Their plants. . . .

[Four lines are here broken away.]

REVERSE

[One line is broken away.]

Father Enlil (?)

 Of mankind
 creation of Enki
 Father Enlil
 Duazagga is surrounded (?), O god. . . .
 Duazagga, the brilliant, I will guard (?) for thee, O god.
 Enki and Enlil cast a spell. . . .
 A flock and Ashnan from Duazag[ga] they cast forth,

¹ An agricultural god.

² The Sumerian is *kalam-e-bi*, which might also be rendered "his land" in the sense of Sumer. In favor of the rendering given in the text is the fact that six times elsewhere in the poem two concrete nouns are followed by *bi* in the sense of "and." In discussing the identity of Takku we shall return to this again.

³ In the Gilgamesh Epic *lalû* is employed for *vulva*.

⁴ Literally "he planned" or "knew."

The flock in a fold they inclosed (?),
 His plants as food for the mother they created.
 Ashnan rained on the field for them;
 The moist (?) wind and the fiery storm cloud they created for them.
 The flock in the fold abode;
 For the shepherd of the fold joy was abundant.
 Ashnan as tall vegetation stood;
 The bright land was green; it afforded full joy.
 From their field a leader arose;
 The son from heaven came to them;
 The flock of Ashnan he made to multiply for them;
 The whole he raised up, he appointed for them;
 The reed-country he appointed for them;
 The voice of their god uttered just decisions for them.
 A dwelling place was their land; food increased the people.
 The prosperity of their land brought them danger;
 They made bricks of clay of the land for its protection.
 The lord caused them to be and they came into existence.
 Companions were they; men with wives he made them dwell;
 By night, by day, they are set as helpers.
 Sixty lines.

The colophon which states that the tablet contained sixty lines assures us that not more than five lines are entirely lost. The text contains a new creation myth, parallel in some respects to that discovered by Dr. Langdon, but independent of it. It deals in a different way with the story of creation, telling first of the creation of man and then of the development of agriculture and the institutions of Babylonian life. It is much more brief than the text published by Langdon; fewer strands from extraneous folklore have found their way into it.

Like the so-called paradise myth, it begins with an elaborate statement of the things that were non-existent, when the great gods, as many as then existed, entered the mountain of heaven and earth. It then proceeds to tell how men were begotten from the marital union of Shamash and Nintu, just as the other text tells how the irrigating waters were begotten by a similar union between Enki and Nintu. According to the myth, these men lived in Babylonia—at least they made themselves huts like the primitive huts of Babylonia—they also began to cultivate gardens. So much

the legible portion of the obverse tells us. From the fragmentary lines at the beginning of the reverse it appears that for some reason an appeal was made to Enlil, whereupon Enlil and Enki by means of an incantation created the vegetable and agricultural god Ashnan and cast him forth from Duazagga. His advent to the earth inaugurated an era of prosperity that made the land pre-eminent. The last three lines form a kind of summary of the whole and state the divinely established relations of people in society.

This tablet, together with those discovered by Poebel and Langdon that have already been discussed, proves that at Nippur there existed in the third millennium B.C. a cycle of creation myths. Still others, or more complete versions of these, may come to light any day. While the one discovered by Poebel seems to have been an earlier and briefer form of myths circulated in later centuries, the other two introduce us to circles of ideas hitherto unknown to Babylonian scholars. They are genuine bits of Babylonian folklore. Of these, the one last mentioned seems to be the more primitive in form. It presents less evidence of reworking, less effort to mold it into a continuous epic.

In this poem Ashnan, as already remarked, was a god of vegetation and fertility. His name is expressed by an ideogram that was compounded of a head of wheat and two tree-tops. The name designates such a deity as in many Babylonian texts was called Dumuzi or Tammuz. Ashnan appears to have been an old Babylonian name for Tammuz.

We are now prepared to return to the question propounded above: Who was Takku? The answer to this cannot, from our present information, be given with certainty. It depends upon the interpretation put upon four passages in the document last translated. Two of these passages are perfectly clear:

For Takku a temple-terrace had not been filled in—
Takku had not been brought forth, a shrine not lifted up.

These lines indicate that Takku was a being to whom shrines (presumably several of them) existed in Babylonia. From the other two passages two different inferences are possible: (1) Takku is a

god of fertility like Ashnan—in reality Ashnan under another name, or (2) Takku is a deified king.

The fourth line of the poem as translated above runs:

Land and water Takku had not created.

If this is the correct rendering, Takku was not a deified king. As already noted, however, we might translate:

His land (i.e., Sumer) Takku had not created.¹

If thus we take *kalam* in a political sense, Takku might be a deified mortal. In six other passages in the tablet where two nouns are followed by *bi*, *bi* is clearly the postpositive conjunction, and in still two others we have a similar construction with *bi-da*. The grammatical analogy of the text is, accordingly, strongly in favor of the rendering of the line which would make it impossible to think Takku a deified mortal. For this reason the rendering in the text has been adopted.

The second of the passages referred to occurs on the reverse of the tablet:

Ashnan as tall vegetation stood;
The bright land was green; it afforded full joy.
From their field a leader arose;
The son from heaven came to them;
The flock of Ashnan he made to multiply for them;
The whole he raised up, he appointed for them;
The reed country he appointed for them;
The voice of their god uttered just decisions for them.

Who was this leader? Was he some earthly king, who was thought to be heaven born, because of what he was able to accomplish? Or was he a god? The name of Takku is not mentioned in the immediate context, but when we consider the connection of Takku with agriculture set forth in Dr. Langdon's tablet it may be plausibly argued that Takku is the being referred to as leader. If, however, Takku were another name for Ashnan, all that is said here would be just as appropriate as it would be were he a deified king.

¹ This rendering of *kalam-e-bi* regards the *e* not as a noun, but as a vocal affix kindred to the definite article (Delitzsch, *Sumerische Grammatik*, § 61), and *bi* as the pronomial suffix "his" rather than as a postpositive conjunction.

The phrase "the son from heaven" (*dumu-gál-an-na-ta*, "the son descending from heaven") applied to the leader introduces the word *dumu* with which the name Tammuz¹ begins, and favors the view that the leader is the god of vegetation. While the matter cannot be definitely decided, the writer is inclined to the theory that Takku is, like Ashnan, a god of fertility and not a deified mortal. If this be the true explanation of him, it is easy to understand how such a god became in the myth the representative of humanity, since men are so dependent upon vegetation and fertility. But in any event there is nothing in this text, as there was nothing in the tablet previously considered, to connect Takku with Noah.

¹ Tammuz is *dumu-zi*, "son of life." Perhaps *gal* here is a scribal error for *zi*.